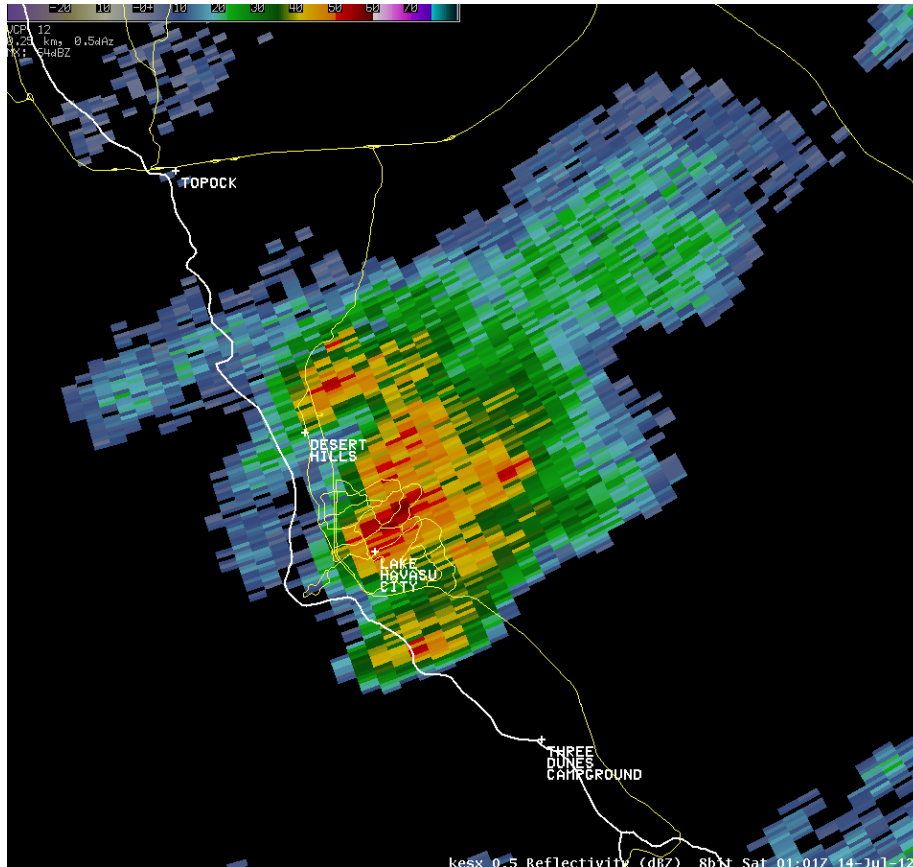


Friday The 13th

Lake Havasu City Flash Flood



Radar image from the Las Vegas Radar (WSR-88D 0.5 degrees elevation) of the thunderstorm that produced significant flash flooding in Lake Havasu City, Arizona at 6:01 PM MST.

Significant flash flooding took place in Lake Havasu City, Arizona on the evening of July 13th, 2012. An upper level disturbance over southern California combined with a tremendous amount of moisture in place across the Mojave Desert to produce numerous thunderstorms. Moisture content in the atmosphere was extremely high for this part of the country. Precipitable water on the evening sounding from July 13th (00Z July 14th) launched at the Las Vegas National Weather Service office was 1.60 inches. Precipitable water is a measure of the depth of liquid water at the surface that would result after precipitating all of the water vapor in a vertical column over a given location, usually extending from the surface to 300 mb. This value is usually a very good indication of the potential for thunderstorms to produce heavy rainfall. In our area values above 1.50 inches are considered well above normal. Model data suggested on the evening of July 13, 2012 that values were even higher south of Las Vegas over the Colorado River Valley.

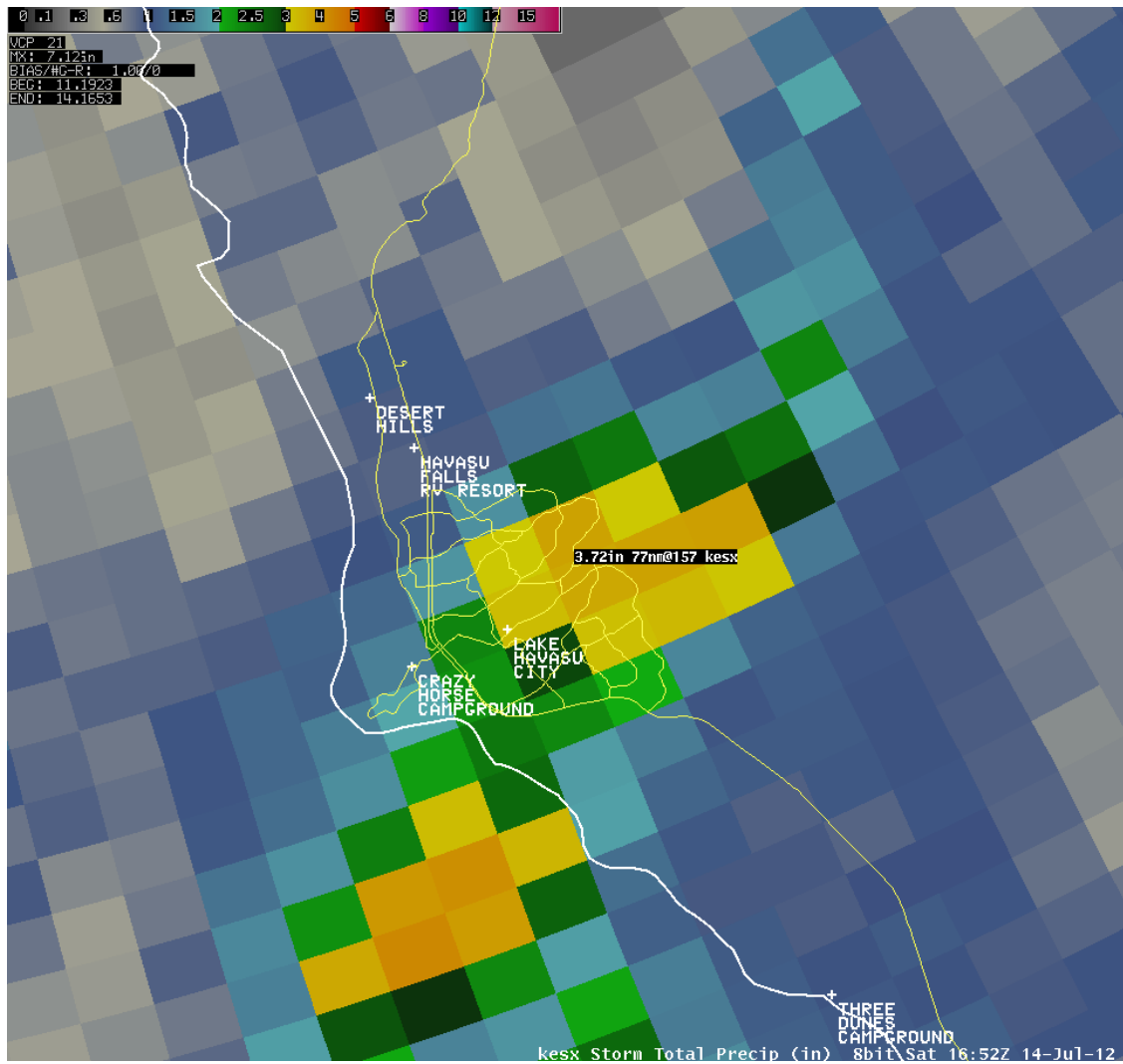
Thunderstorms began to develop across southeast San Bernardino County, California and move toward Lake Havasu City, Arizona after 5PM. The intensity of the rain increased around 5:30 PM. The first report of flash flooding was reported to WFO Las Vegas as happening at 5:40 PM on July 13th and was of 8 inches of water flowing across roads. Flooding intensified in the next 30 minutes especially as heavier rain from higher areas in the eastern part of Lake Havasu City drained west. There were a total of 9 swiftwater rescues involving at least 11 people. The fatality involved a man who was in a vehicle along with 2 others that was in floodwaters at 6:32 PM. The man was trying to exit the vehicle after the other two people had safely done so and was swept away by the water into a wash. His body was found in the wash where it entered Rotary Park. There were several calls of missing people in washes during the event but all were accounted for. Several cars and motorcycles were swept away by floodwaters. One motorcycle was caught on video floating down the street in a residential neighborhood. A total of 2.59 inches was reported at Mohave County Community College and this was the highest storm total reported.

The flooding resulted in water damage to a few homes. The roof collapsed in one home over a dining room. One home was struck by lightning with damages estimated at \$5,000. Power poles were knocked down by the storm. Many roads were flooded and damaged with some sidewalks undermined. Rotary Park received damage to sidewalks and mud filled the park from runoff from a nearby wash. Lake Havasu itself was filled with mud and debris as it ran into the lake from the washes that drain into it.

The above information is preliminary. Further information on damages with this event is still being gathered.



Car swept into a wash by the flood in Lake Havasu City. Sent by a spotter to NWS Las Vegas.



Radar estimated storm total precipitation for Lake Havasu City using the legacy algorithm from the WSR-88D. These totals were too high by about an inch. The heaviest rain fell over the northern and eastern parts of Lake Havasu City which resulted in runoff to lower elevations along the Colorado River.